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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities--Center on Early Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Learning for Young Children with Disabilities

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for a new award for fiscal year (FY) 2018 for Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities--Center on Early Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Learning for Young Children with Disabilities, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.327G.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant

Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dawn Ellis, U.S.

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If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program are to: (1) improve results for students with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) support educational activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom for students with disabilities; (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom; and (4) provide accessible educational materials to students with disabilities in a timely manner.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 674(b)(2) and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 20 U.S.C. 1474(b) and 1481(d)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2018 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Center on Early Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Learning for Young Children with Disabilities.

Background:

The mission of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is to improve early childhood, educational, and employment outcomes and raise expectations for all people with disabilities, their families, their communities, and the Nation.

As early as infancy, young children start developing and testing hypotheses about how things work. These inquiry-based skills and the quest for understanding form the foundation for early science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning. Research shows that early

exposure to STEM learning has positive impacts across developmental domains and can positively impact later learning and academic performance (Duncan et al., 2007; Mantzicopoulos, Patrick, & Samarapungavan, 2008).

Because of these impacts, experts have recommended that early childhood programs intentionally integrate STEM learning into the curricula and that it be considered an essential component of a high-quality early childhood experience (Brenneman, Stevenson-Boyd, & Frede, 2009; National Research Council, 2009). While there have been recent efforts to fund STEM initiatives for early childhood, there has been a lack of focus specifically on how to support STEM learning in infants, toddlers, and preschool children (young children) with disabilities.

This focus is necessary, however, because young children with disabilities often require specialized supports to engage in STEM learning, which can help young children achieve developmental and educational outcomes under Parts C and B of the IDEA. Many STEM activities require children to use fine and gross motor skills to physically engage with objects, have the mobility to participate in experiments, or use different senses to explore how something works. STEM activities also typically require children to ask questions, have focused

attention, and solve problems. All of these may pose challenges for some young children with disabilities. Yet the hands-on approach and active engagement needed for STEM learning is an ideal way for young children with disabilities to develop skills and achieve goals within their individualized family service plans (IFSPs) or individualized education programs (IEPs). Identifying best practices in providing STEM learning to young children with disabilities, including through the use of technology, would help maximize the benefits to them.

To ensure that young children with disabilities can engage in and benefit from STEM learning, this priority will fund a cooperative agreement to establish and operate a Center on Early STEM Learning for Young Children with Disabilities (the Center). The Center will assemble a body of knowledge on the practices and supports, including the use of technology, necessary to improve STEM learning for young children with disabilities. The Center will also disseminate these practices and supports to early childhood programs, administrators, providers, families of children with disabilities, and institutions of higher education (IHEs).

This priority is consistent with three priorities from the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and

Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, which were published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096): Priority 5--Meeting the Unique Needs of Students and Children With Disabilities and/or Those With Unique Gifts and Talents; Priority 6--Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science; and Priority 8--Promoting Effective Instruction in Classrooms and Schools. Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to establish and operate a national Center on Early Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Learning, for Young Children with Disabilities to achieve, at a minimum, the following expected outcomes:

(a) Increased body of knowledge of current evidence-based (as defined in this notice) practices (EBPs) for early STEM learning, including early computer science learning for young children with disabilities;

(b) Increased use by early childhood programs, providers, and families of the current EBPs in early STEM learning for young children with disabilities; and

(c) Increased awareness by faculty in IHEs of the current EBPs in early STEM learning for young children with

disabilities and increased focus on early STEM learning within programs of study within IHEs.

In addition to these programmatic requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements in this priority, which are:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how the proposed project will--

(1) Address the need in the field for knowledge about early STEM learning for young children with disabilities and their families. To meet this requirement the applicant must--

(i) Demonstrate knowledge of the current and emerging EBPs in early STEM learning for all young children, and specifically around using technology to improve access to early STEM learning for young children with disabilities and their families; and

(ii) Demonstrate knowledge of current educational and policy issues and national initiatives relating to early STEM learning for all young children and their families, and specifically for young children with disabilities and their families;

(2) Address current and emerging capacity needs of early childhood programs, providers, and families to select and implement current EBPs that will improve early STEM learning for young children with disabilities, including using technology to improve their access to early STEM learning activities. To meet this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Present information and data on the current capacity of early childhood providers to effectively support early STEM learning in young children with disabilities;

(ii) Present information and data on how early STEM learning is included within personnel preparation programs;

(iii) Demonstrate knowledge of the implementation supports (e.g., professional development and training, ongoing consultation and coaching, performance assessments, data systems to support decision-making, administrative supports) that are needed to implement new practices within early childhood programs and services; and

(iv) Demonstrate knowledge of how to educate, engage, and support families of young children with disabilities to implement early STEM learning activities;

(3) Improve the potential for early STEM outcomes for young children with disabilities and indicate the likely magnitude or importance of these outcomes.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of project services," how the proposed project will--

(1) Ensure equal access and treatment for members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe how it will--

(i) Identify the needs of the intended recipients for technical assistance (TA) and information;

(ii) Ensure that services and products meet the needs of the intended recipients of the grant;

(iii) As appropriate, address the needs of young children with disabilities who are Native American or are dual language learners (i.e., English is not the primary language spoken in the home); and

(iv) As appropriate, address the needs of military-connected young children with disabilities;

(2) Achieve its goals, objectives, and intended outcomes. To meet this requirement, the applicant must provide--

- (i) Measurable intended project outcomes; and
- (ii) In Appendix A, the logic model (as defined in this notice) by which the proposed project will achieve its intended outcomes that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the proposed project;

(3) Use a conceptual framework (and provide a copy in Appendix A to develop project plans and activities, describing any underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, or theories, as well as the presumed relationships or linkages among these variables, and any empirical support for this framework;

Note: The following websites provide more information on logic models and conceptual frameworks:

www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel and
www.osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta/tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework.

(4) Be based on current research and make use of EBPs. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

- (i) The current research on practices to support early STEM learning for young children with disabilities

and the use of technology to improve access to early STEM learning for young children with disabilities;

(ii) The current research about adult learning principles and implementation science or improvement science that will inform the proposed products; and

(iii) How the proposed project will incorporate current research and EBPs in the development and delivery of its products and services;

(5) Develop products and provide services that are of high quality and sufficient intensity and duration to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) How it proposes to identify or develop the knowledge base on:

(A) EBPs on early STEM learning for young children with disabilities;

(B) Use of technology to improve access to early STEM learning for young children with disabilities;

(C) What young children should know or be able to do in early STEM at different ages;

(D) Integration of early STEM learning into IFSPs under Part C of the IDEA and IEPs under Part B of the IDEA; and

(E) Implementation supports needed for early childhood programs and providers to have the capacity to implement the early STEM learning practices, and educate, engage, and support families of young children with disabilities in implementing opportunities for early STEM learning.

(ii) Its proposed approach to universal, general TA,¹ which must identify the intended recipients of the products and services under this approach and should include, at minimum, activities focused on--

(A) Developing and disseminating resources, materials, and tools for faculty at IHEs to embed current EBPs on early STEM learning for young children with disabilities within personnel preparation programs of study;

(B) Developing and disseminating resources, materials, and tools for early childhood programs and providers on current EBPs on early STEM learning for young children with disabilities, including: how to incorporate

¹ "Universal, general TA" means TA and information provided to independent users through their own initiative, resulting in minimal interaction with TA center staff and including one-time, invited or offered conference presentations by TA center staff. This category of TA also includes information or products, such as newsletters, guidebooks, or research syntheses, downloaded from the TA center's website by independent users. Brief communications by TA center staff with recipients, either by telephone or email, are also considered universal, general TA.

early STEM learning into IFSPs and IEPs to achieve child outcomes identified on the IFSP or IEP; how to use technology to increase opportunities for early STEM learning and deliver instruction or interventions that promote early STEM learning; and how to work with families to help promote early STEM learning with their child; and

(C) Partnering with national professional organizations, foundations, industry and research organizations and centers to disseminate information on how young children with disabilities can be included in broader early STEM research, policies, and practices, including within new curricula and learning materials.

(iii) Its proposed approach to targeted, specialized TA,² which must identify the intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients that will receive the products and services under this approach; and

(6) Develop products and implement services that maximize efficiency. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

² "Targeted, specialized TA" means TA services based on needs common to multiple recipients and not extensively individualized. A relationship is established between the TA recipient and one or more TA center staff. This category of TA includes one-time, labor-intensive events, such as facilitating strategic planning or hosting regional or national conferences. It can also include episodic, less labor-intensive events that extend over a period of time, such as facilitating a series of conference calls on single or multiple topics that are designed around the needs of the recipients. Facilitating communities of practice can also be considered targeted, specialized TA.

(i) How the proposed project will use technology to achieve the intended project outcomes;

(ii) With whom the proposed project will collaborate and the intended outcomes of this collaboration; and

(iii) How the proposed project will use non-project resources to achieve the intended project outcomes.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," include an evaluation plan for the project as described in the following paragraphs. The evaluation plan must describe: measures of progress in implementation, including the criteria for determining the extent to which the project's products and services have met the goals for reaching its target population; measures of intended outcomes or results of the project's activities in order to evaluate those activities; and how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project, as described in its logic model, have been met.

The applicant must provide an assurance that, in designing the evaluation plan, it will--

(1) Designate, with the approval of the OSEP project officer, a project liaison staff person with sufficient dedicated time, experience in evaluation, and knowledge of the project to work in collaboration with the Center to

Improve Program and Project Performance (CIP3),³ the project director, and the OSEP project officer on the following tasks:

(i) Revise, as needed, the logic model submitted in the grant application to provide for a more comprehensive measurement of implementation and outcomes and to reflect any changes or clarifications to the model discussed at the kick-off meeting;

(ii) Refine the evaluation design and instrumentation proposed in the grant application consistent with the logic model (e.g., prepare evaluation questions about significant program processes and outcomes, develop quantitative or qualitative data collections that permit both the collection of progress data, including fidelity of implementation, as appropriate, and the assessment of project outcomes; and identify analytic strategies); and

(iii) Revise, as needed, the evaluation plan submitted in the grant application such that it clearly--

³ The major tasks of CIP3 are to guide, coordinate, and oversee the design of formative evaluations for every large discretionary investment (i.e., those awarded \$500,000 or more per year and required to participate in the 3+2 process) in OSEP's Technical Assistance and Dissemination; Personnel Development; Parent Training and Information Centers; and Educational Technology, Media, and Materials programs. The efforts of CIP3 are expected to enhance individual project evaluation plans by providing expert and unbiased TA in designing the evaluations with due consideration of the project's budget. CIP3 does not function as a third-party evaluator.

(A) Specifies the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions, suggests analytic strategies for those data, provides a timeline for conducting the evaluation, and includes staff assignments for completion of the plan;

(B) Delineates the data expected to be available by the end of the second project year for use during the project's evaluation (3+2 review) for continued funding described under the heading Fourth and Fifth Years of the Project; and

(C) Can be used to assist the project director and the OSEP project officer, with the assistance of CIP3, as needed, to specify the performance measures to be addressed in the project's Annual Performance Report;

(2) Cooperate with CIP3 staff in order to accomplish the tasks described in paragraph (1) of this section; and

(3) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of carrying out the tasks described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this section and implementing the evaluation plan.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel," how--

(1) The proposed project will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, as appropriate;

(2) The proposed key project providers, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications and experience to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and

(4) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the management plan," how--

(1) The proposed management plan will ensure that the project's intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project providers, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable; and

(ii) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks;

(2) Key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors, and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The proposed management plan will ensure that the products and services provided are of high quality, relevant, and useful to recipients; and

(4) The proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including those of researchers, faculty, early childhood administrators, providers across different types of early childhood programs, families, and policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

(f) Address the following application requirements.
The applicant must--

(1) Include, in Appendix A, providers-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;

(2) Include, in the budget, attendance at the following:

(i) A one and one-half day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC, after receipt of the award, and an annual planning meeting in Washington, DC, with the OSEP project officer and other relevant staff during each subsequent year of the project period.

Note: Within 30 days of receipt of the award, a post-award teleconference must be held between the OSEP project officer and the grantee's project director or other authorized representative;

(ii) A two and one-half day project directors' conference in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period;

(iii) Three trips annually to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored conferences, and other meetings, as requested by OSEP; and

(iv) A one-day intensive 3+2 review meeting in Washington, DC, during the last half of the second year of the project period;

(3) Include, in the budget, a line item for an annual set-aside of five percent of the grant amount to support emerging needs that are consistent with the proposed project's intended outcomes, as those needs are identified in consultation with, and approved by, the OSEP project officer.

Note: With approval from the OSEP project officer, the project must reallocate any remaining funds from this annual set-aside no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period;

(4) Describe how doctoral students or post-doctoral fellows will be engaged in the project to increase the number of future leaders in the field who are knowledgeable about early STEM learning for young children with disabilities, including the use of technology to increase access to early STEM learning; and

(5) Maintain a high-quality website, with an easy-to-navigate design, that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

(6) Include, in Appendix A, an assurance that the project will assist OSEP with the transfer of pertinent resources and products and will maintain the continuity of services during the transition at the end of this award period, as appropriate.

Fourth and Fifth Years of the Project:

In deciding whether to continue funding the project for the fourth and fifth years, the Secretary will consider the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a), as well as--

(a) The recommendation of a 3+2 review team consisting of experts selected by the Secretary. This review will be conducted during a one-day intensive meeting that will be held during the last half of the second year of the project period;

(b) The timeliness with which, and how well, the requirements of the negotiated cooperative agreement have been or are being met by the project; and

(c) The quality, relevance, and usefulness of the project's products and services and the extent to which the project's products and services are aligned with the project's objectives and likely to result in the project achieving its intended outcomes.

References:

Brenneman, K., Stevenson-Boyd, J., & Frede, E. (2009).

Mathematics and science in preschool: Policies and practice. NIEER Policy Brief (Issue 19). Available from <http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/MathSciencePolicyBrief0309.pdf>.

Duncan, G. J., Dowsett, C. J., Claessens, A., Magnuson, K., Huston, A., Klebanov, P., ... Japel, C. (2007).

School readiness and later achievement. Developmental Psychology, 43(6), 1428-1446.

Mantzicopoulos, P., Patrick, H., & Samarapungavan, A.

(2008). Young children's motivational beliefs about learning science. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 23(3), 378-394. Available from www.researchgate.net/profile/Panayota_Mantzicopoulos/publication/222704499_Young_children%27s_motivational_b

eliefs_about_learning_science/links/0c9605265240e6d71b
000000/Young-childrens-motivational-beliefs-about-
learning-science.pdf.

National Research Council. (2009). Mathematics learning
in early childhood: Paths toward excellence and
equity. Washington, DC: The National Academies
Press.

Definitions:

The following definitions are from 34 CFR 77.1:

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component
included in the project's logic model is informed by
research or evaluation findings that suggest the project
component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Evidence-based means the proposed project component is
supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate
evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates
a rationale.

Experimental study means a study that is designed to
compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as
students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their
assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project
component or a control group that does not. Randomized
controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies,
and single-case design studies are the specific types of

experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbook:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant

outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

- (i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a “strong evidence base” or “moderate evidence base” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

- (ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a “positive effect” or “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a “medium to large” extent of evidence, with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

- (iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that--

- (A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a

relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that--

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome.

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the

treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbook.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

Strong evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "strong evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook reporting a "positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no reporting of a

“negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that--

(A) Meets WWC standards without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1 or 3.0 of the WWC Handbook; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement.

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC

Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 2.1 or 3.0 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the Handbook documentation.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1474 and 1481.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as

adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Available Funds: \$1,450,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2019 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding \$1,450,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: SEAs; State lead agencies under Part C of the IDEA; LEAs, including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely

associated States and outlying areas; Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Subgrantees: Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c) a grantee under this competition may award subgrants--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: IHEs and private nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application.

4. Other General Requirements:

(a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA) .

(b) Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA) .

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: For information on how to submit an application please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2018 (83 FR 6003) and available at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-02-12/pdf/2018-02558.pdf.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

3. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 70 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses;

(ii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study; and

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(b) Quality of project services (35 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have

traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(ii) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework;

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(iv) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives; and

(v) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(c) Quality of the project evaluation (15 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes; and

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(d) Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the , the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In determining the adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator;

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(iii) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization;

(iv) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project; and

(v) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(e) Quality of the management plan (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(ii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

(iii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project; and

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any

discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected

for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000),

under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send

you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal

restrictions on the use of pre-existing works.

Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

5. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities program. These measures are:

- Program Performance Measure #1: The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged to be of high quality by an independent review panel of experts qualified to review the substantial content of the products and services;

- Program Performance Measure #2: The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged to be of high relevance to improving outcomes for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities;

- Program Performance Measure #3: The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged to be of useful in improving results for infants, toddler, children and youth with disabilities;

- Program Performance Measure #4.1: The federal cost per unit of accessible educational materials funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program;

- Program Performance Measure #4.2: The federal cost per unit of accessible educational materials from the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program; and

- Program Performance Measure #4.3: The federal cost per unit of video description funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program.

Projects funded under this competition are required to submit data on these measures as directed by OSEP.

Grantees will be required to report information on their project's performance in annual performance reports and additional performance data to the Department (34 CFR 75.590 and 75.591).

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance

measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the Management Support Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5113, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-2500. Telephone: (202) 245-7363. If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

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Dated: June 26, 2018.

Johnny W. Collett,

*Assistant Secretary for Special
Education and Rehabilitative
Services.*

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